

Title (en)
OPTICAL ATTENUATOR AND OPTICAL HEAD DEVICE

Title (de)
OPTISCHES DÄMPFUNGSGLIED UND OPTISCHE KOPFEINRICHTUNG

Title (fr)
ATTENUATEUR OPTIQUE ET DISPOSITIF A TETE OPTIQUE

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Application
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Abstract (en)
The present invention provides an optical attenuator reducing variations in optical attenuation amount in response to temperature change, and an optical head device having properties excellent in recording and reproducing an information. An optical attenuator comprising a liquid crystal element having spirally arranged molecules in which a liquid crystal layer 107 is sandwiched between transparent electrodes 103 and 104, and a polarizing beam splitter 110 whose transmittance is changed depending on a polarization state, wherein the ordinary refractive index (n_o) and the extraordinary refractive index (n_e) of liquid crystal, the angle (θ_{pt}) of liquid crystal molecules against the transparent substrate surfaces, the thickness (d) of the liquid crystal layer 107 and the wavelength (λ) of incident light, constituent elements are configured so that the value A satisfies the range of from 0.5 to 1.5 in the conditional formula defined by the formula (1):
$$A = \frac{\Delta n \cdot d}{\lambda \sqrt{n_o^2 \cos^2(\theta_{pt}) + n_e^2 \sin^2(\theta_{pt}) - n_o^2}}$$
 wherein $\Delta n = n_e - n_o$.

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